

The Interview Times

NOVEMBER | VOLUME VI. NO. 7

INSPIRING THE YOUNG AT HEART

FREEDOM OF PRESS IN INDIA

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**Diwali
SPECIAL**
Edition

“Unity among its diversity”, is what defines our country India. Our motherland is the home of several religions and infinite dialects. However, unfortunately, the conversation among the modern and elite society is mostly either in English or Hindi. Moreover, the digital platform, where the future prospect of our country lies, is devoid of vernacular languages. Therefore, Dr Ajay Data, a pioneer of the digital sphere, launched VideoMeet and Data Mail App to help Indian people converse in their mother-tongue on the digital-platform.

Interview Times had a great conversation with Dr. Ajay Data, Founder, VideoMeet Pvt. Ltd- who spoke about the ideology behind VideoMeet and Datamail apps and the prospects of digitalization in India.

This is how the Interview went-



Can you brief about yourself to our readers?

I hail from Khairthal, a village in Alwar District, Rajasthan. Due to my early formal education being only in the native language and Hindi, I never had command over the English language. However, while doing graduation from the Commerce College, University of Rajasthan, I was highly motivated to get comfortable with the

language and, thus, joined three different spoken English classes. After that, I went on to pursue an MBA in Computer Applications and completed a PhD in Electronic Data Processing.

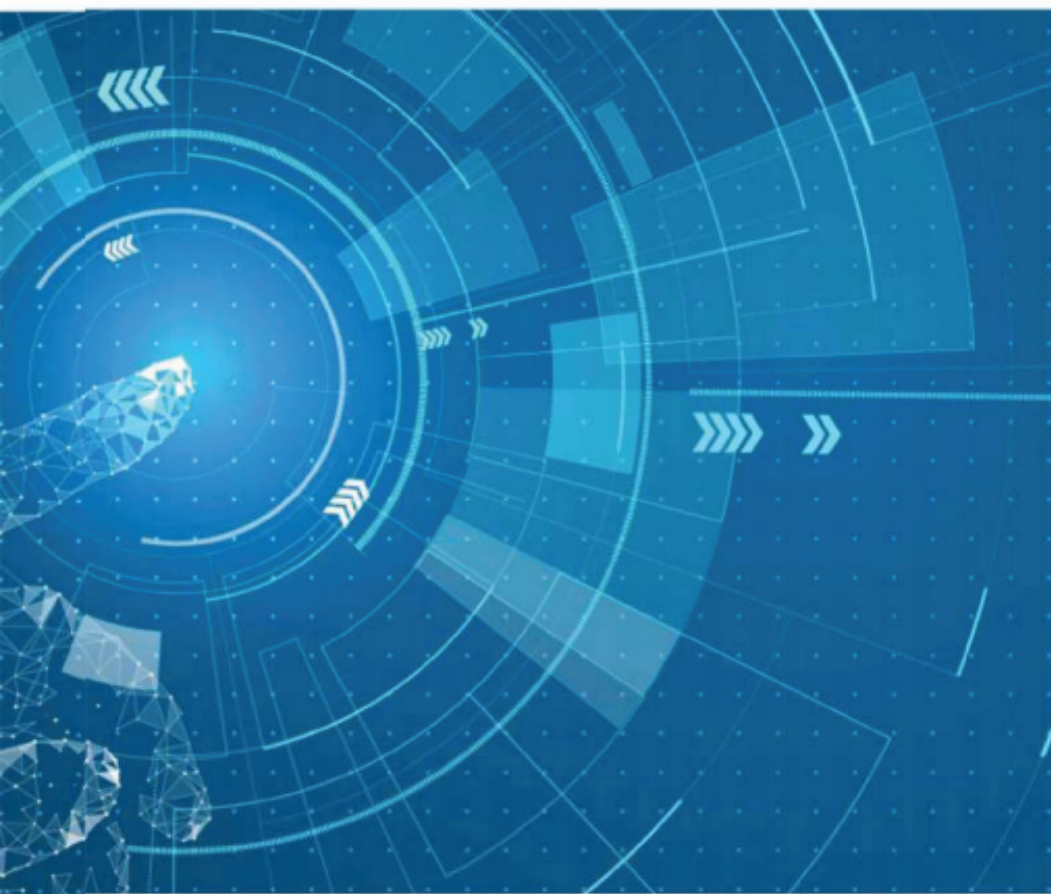
Coming from a humble family that runs an edible oil business, I started my career with the new family business of Electrical insulators and bone china. As the technology and devices have always motivated me, India IT sector that was in its preliminary stage around 1999 intrigued me, and I felt that the time has come to enter into this expansive arena of Internet and Data. Computers, to begin with, were my first passion; I like how they function on logic and tasks can be done faster and in a more efficient way. This strong belief in the power of IT and curiosity to learn has helped me create software related to accounting, daily expense sheets, and attendance management sheets. I feel blessed to be able to utilize

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my skills and put them into use in a constructive manner. I started my company Data Infosys, an Internet service provider company, in Jaipur. With no guidance and mentorship, it comes across as the best decision I ever made. In the next year only, we set up internet

REALIZATION MASSIVE MOVEMENT TOWARDS CREATION EMPLOYMENT



connectivity in the state, the first company to do so. Our focus was on making internet connectivity accessible, reliable, and available at a low cost.

What was the motto behind launching the world's first Lan-

guage email address via Datamail app?

Within the first few years of setting up Data Infosys, we tried building enterprise email platform. I began the task by creating email accounts for people and

companies. There was no software for an email in India. Then we heard

Govt of India working on domain names in Indian languages. We realized this could be a game-changer for our entire nation and world. Just around that time, the Government of India announced linguistic domain names in over 15 Indian languages. Bit of research told us that there is no software in the world which could provide email hosting for those domains. Hence, we started figuring out the methods as hosting these domains was a herculean task. We tried getting to the root of the problem and build an email hosting mechanism; this led to the shaping of 'DataMail' with personal investments. Datamail, one of the world's first linguistic email address mobile apps for Internationalised Domain Names (IDN), helps people communicate in 34 languages; it was created for people who aren't comfortable with the English language as their mode of communication.

Setting up these Indic domain names is a complex task because English as a language has only 250 characters while other languages have characters close to a million. Additionally, each English character has only one byte of data while the character in other languages has a byte size ranging from one to four; this makes the entire process time-consuming and complex. My team toiled for almost two years to crack this technology, and in 2016 we bore the fruits of our hard work. Thus DataMail came into being,

and it was a one of a kind innovation, strengthening the Indian IT ecosystem. I even received a Graham Bell Award for it; this would never have been possible without all my team's collective efforts. We are now trying to expand the linguistic digitization tools, as we want every citizen of India to reap the benefits of data connectivity cost-effectively. Are you happy with the response Datamail has received so far?

Datamail was created with a strong belief and ambition. India has a multitude of vernacular languages, and people aspire to carry out professional and personal communication digitally in their native language. Solely for this reason, our service has been receiving tremendous response and has also been adopted by corporate organizations. We recently launched our service in the Kannada language for free to 50 million native speakers

How did you get the idea for launching Video meet?

With remote working becoming the new norm due to pandemic, I wanted to build an indigenous video-conferencing application that delivers enhanced security and privacy in professional and personal meetings. In March 2020, we developed VideoMeet, a free and secure audio/video conferencing platform that can support thousands of people in one session. The platform, which has already been used for lakhs of minutes for conferences and webinars, allows live streaming of webinars and conferences on You-

Tube and Facebook. Our unique framework helps users regulate data consumption, unlike other virtual conferencing platforms. Some of the other unique features include screen recording, Video quality control, waiting room, screen share, music share, flip cameras, chat during video calls, etc. All the voice notification is in an Indian accent. There are many unique features for the host to manage participants audio/ video etc. to deliver a great experience

India is turning Digital in every sphere for economic and social growth. Are you happy with the Digital growth, or do you have some suggestions which can improve the digitization further?

I am happy for the growth and exposure India is getting on digital fronts, especially after the ban on Chinese apps and increased online presence due to the recent social distancing norms. My suggestion to the government would be to strengthen the ideology of Self-Reliance further by encouraging a stable row for investors in the IT products and services.

Turning Digital is good, but how can it help the abundant poorer section of the society who are unaware of this platform?

It can massively drive them towards better exposure and more inclusion in skill-based jobs, leading to better employment opportunities and growth.

Also, being an expensive medium, how did you think it can reach the

masses of the village who probably cannot afford it?

The telecom networks, which are on a pedestal with a user base in millions, must create concessionary plans for the rural population. The Internet has the capability to become the backbone of our nation. We must utilize this opportunity and maximize its potential for the betterment of our country. From primary to the tertiary sector, businesses and industries all around are exuberating growth via digitalization.

Do you have any set-off plans for your future?

Our target is to go from two lakh daily meeting minutes to three million minutes on the network in the next 12 months. We're also looking to add more languages on the VideoMeet besides Hindi. In terms of product innovations, VideoMeet is working on an augmented reality feature to bring a virtual meeting as close to reality as possible, as well as AI-led language transcripts of meetings for ease-of-use. We are planning to raise capital soon and have been "approached" by investors already.

Any piece of advice for young IT professionals?

My advice to all the tech enthusiasts is: "Work and build something that can give you an IP. Build something different and unique, and keep building on it. And strive for an IP." With technology, one has the power to bring a wave of change.